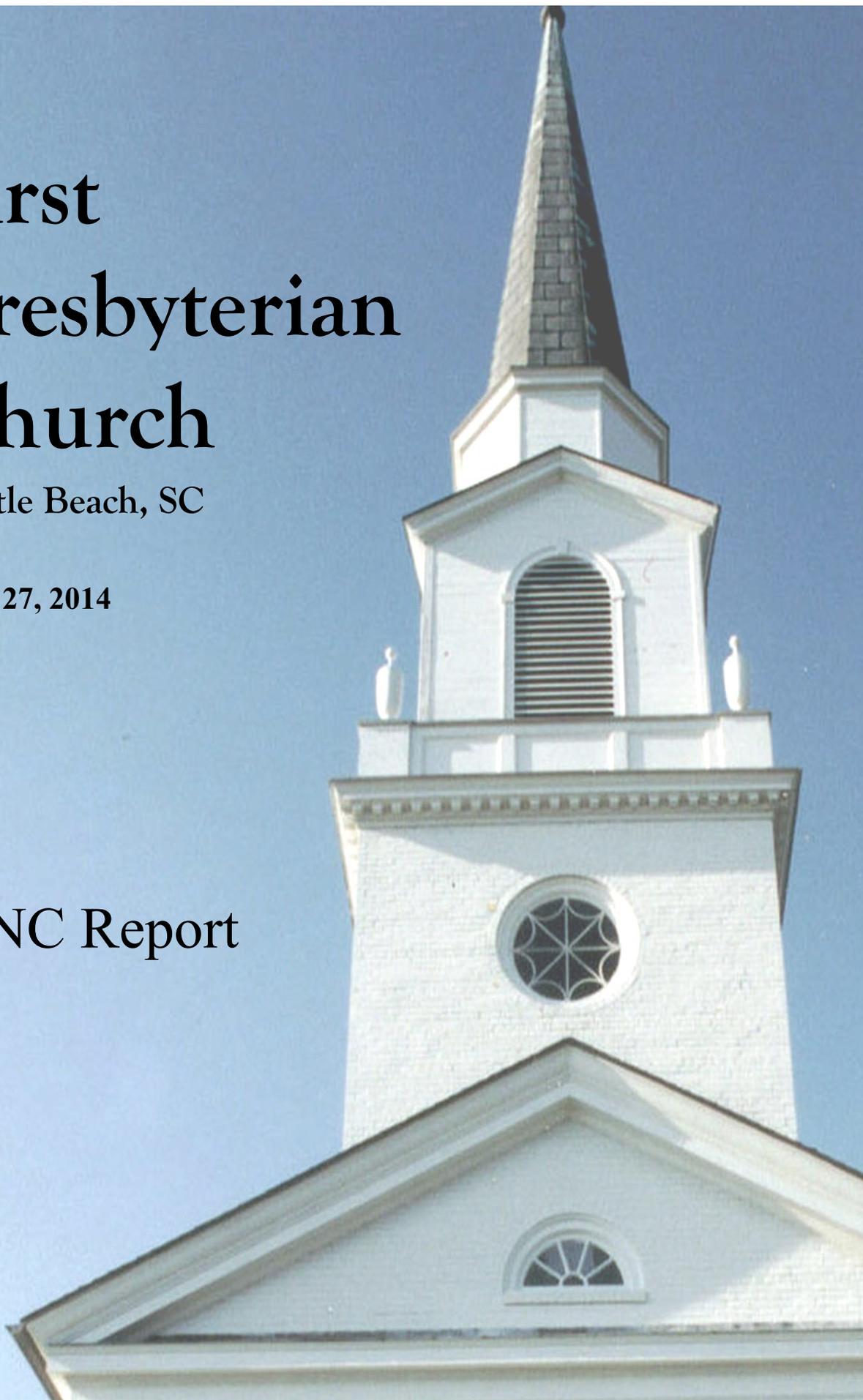


First Presbyterian Church

Myrtle Beach, SC

April 27, 2014

PNC Report



The Pastor Nominating Committee

Would Like You to Meet.....



Cameron W. Thomas

Biographical Information

Hailing from the small rural community of Barbeque, North Carolina, Cam Thomas considers himself one of the foremost unofficial barbeque ambassadors on the Eastern Seaboard. Since 2011 Cam and his wife Mary have lived in Richmond, Virginia, where he has been a student Union Seminary. He will be awarded a Master of Divinity degree on May 31. Cam also has certification and experience in patient counseling through Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Prior to entering seminary, Cam spent four years as a high school teacher and football coach in Lillington, North Carolina, after graduating from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington with a BA in History. While on the faculty at Western Harnett High School, he became reacquainted with Mary Melissa Goodnight whom he had first met and fallen in love with while in the third grade. As coach of the school tennis team, Mary needed a driver to transport her players to matches, and Cam just happened to have his bus license. While spending hours together at tennis courts all over eastern North Carolina, Cam and Mary became good friends, and over time they fell in love. Following a beach proposal at Bald Head Island, the couple was married on August 7, 2010.

Ever the adventurers, Cam and Mary have explored many areas of the country, including the Grand Canyon and Sedona in Arizona and more recently, a frozen-over Lake Erie. Their sidekick on many of these adventures is Zeb, an affectionate and mischievous Walker Treeing Coonhound whose talents include hunting down the warmest spot on the couch. Cam says what Zeb lacks in focus, he makes up for in distractibility!

Zeb, Cam, and Mary enjoy spending time together and with friends and family, sharing meals, jokes and stories. On sunny days you can find them on local jogging trails, bike paths, or the beach. Be on the lookout for an enthusiastic, energetic dog pulling Cam and Mary toward another adventure.

The Pastor Nominating Committee
Joyfully and Unanimously
Recommends to the Congregation

Cameron W. Thomas

and Nominates Him as Associate Pastor
of the First Presbyterian Church
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Jim Watson and Bob Calamari, Co-chairs

Tyler Anthony
Margaret Bellamy
Summer Butler
Sue Cranford

Lucia Gore
Joseph Jumper
Raymond Riggs
Diane Stokes

Amelia Tadlock
Robert Warner

The Presbytery of New Harmony requests that our congregation meet today for the purpose of electing a pastor and approving the terms of call.

The Examining Subcommittee and full Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of New Harmony each examined Mr. Thomas on April 8, 2014, and approved and received him as a minister member of New Harmony Presbytery pending his call by this congregation on April 27, 2014. After which the Presbytery of New Harmony will act on the recommendation of the Committee of Ministry at a called meeting this summer, and an ordination and installation service will follow. If elected, Mr. Thomas will move to Myrtle Beach and will officially begin his ministry at the morning worship services on Sunday, June 15.

Comments from our PNC Members:

“I knew before I ever met Cam Thomas that I wanted him to be a part of the FPC family. His name came to us as a highly recommended candidate. As I began my research I found pictures of him at the church he was serving. These pictures showed a person who was full of love, happiness, and joy. I could tell that these attributes were contagious and would fit in with our church ‘where love makes the difference’.” *Summer Butler*

“The first time our committee talked with Cam we knew that he would be a great fit with our congregation. His energy and enthusiasm for his call to ministry is contagious. After spending time with him and Mary, it is obvious that they will both be a blessing to our church. We are excited to welcome them to First Presbyterian Church of Myrtle Beach.” *Lucia Gore*

“Before the PNC even began this process, we knew God had already chosen the right person for our church. It was clear within the first few minutes of visiting with Cam that he was the chosen candidate. His enthusiasm about God and sharing God's love with our young people at MBFPC was evidently clear. Cam is not only excited about beginning his ministry at FPC, but also becoming an active member of our community.” *Ray Riggs*

“Cam will be a great asset to our church in many ways. His positive attitude, personality and Christ-like manner will provide great leadership in our church and community. We will be blessed to have Cam as a part of our First Presbyterian Family.” *Ty Anthony*

“Cam is a fun, exciting and dynamic person that will help fulfill the Church's needs and to motivate and strengthen the youth and young adults. We are so blessed to have Cam and his wife Mary joining us. The excitement and enthusiasm Cam brings will create a nurturing environment for our teenagers, young single adults and young families.” *Bob Calamari*

“Cam is going to bring a lot of energy and fun to the youth of the church, and I cannot wait to see what he has in store for us!” *Joseph Jumper*

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Cameron Thomas

It seems like we have a biblical precedent for people avoiding initial calls to ministry. Jeremiah told God that he was too young and did not know how to speak. My spiritual journey may be one where I spent some days and nights in a vocational wilderness, but parish ministry somehow had a way of coming back to the forefront. At The Barbecue Presbyterian Church in Sanford, NC, I was baptized in the winter of 1984. It was in this congregation where I first worshipped, attended Church School, and began learning the faith that we confess. During my time at Barbecue, I got to travel with some very faithful teaching elders and Christian educators along my spiritual journey. It is the guidance and influence of these witnesses that is really the starting point of my own journey.

During college, I worked as a camp counselor at Camp Monroe in Laurel Hill, NC. After college, I began teaching high school Social Studies and coaching football. As teacher and facilitator, I found that my teaching life and relationships with campers and students help me to grow as my own life and faith was enriched. As we talked about life, struggles, the human narrative and experience, and our call to be covenant people, I found myself gaining perspective as to how these concepts are consistent with biblical mandates being lived out in the parish. As I continued to teach high school, I sought ways to help more. I knew that I wanted to help people and I was searching for an avenue by which to do this. Having always been active in congregations, the faint call to parish ministry resounded once again, and it was my task to see where this led. It led to a visitation weekend at Union Presbyterian Seminary. I went there, saw the campus, and met the people. I was impressed by the culture of gracious hospitality sustained by our faith. After this weekend was over, I went back home and had a lot to think about. The visitation was nice, but the question remained: “Is seminary and, even more crucial, parish ministry for me?”

(Spiritual Journey continued)

About two weeks after I returned from Richmond, my now father-in-law was nearly killed in a car accident. Bill is the pastor at Lillington Presbyterian Church in Lillington, NC. What happened in the subsequent weeks was the church's life together in action. The waiting room at UNC Chapel Hill hospital had a steady stream of friends caring for and praying with Bill's family. A congregation had had their pastor plucked right away from them. Yet they rallied, took on more roles of leadership, and continued to minister in their community. The small community of Lillington ebbed and flowed with the news from Chapel Hill with people from all of the congregations joining in ecumenical prayer. People that did not regularly attend worship sent their well wishes and helped in other ways. This experience answered that question. Parish ministry is for me and I am for parish ministry. I am called to be part of something larger than myself. The parish as a part of the Church universal is the people of God in community as we worship, live, struggle, rejoice, and serve together in the ministry of Christ.

My wife Mary, who is my chief partner in life and ministry, and I went to seminary. With my colleagues, I learned about the tradition of and the outlook for our life together in faith. We pray that our next step takes us to First Presbyterian Church Myrtle Beach. I believe that I am blessed. When we hear God's words to Abram, we remember that we are blessed to be a blessing. So it is with First Presbyterian Myrtle Beach and our partnership there. God has been faithful to us in the past, giving us much for which we are responsible and for which we are the stewards. Our call is to use these blessings to be a blessing to our world, to the Church, and to the local community. Mary and I are called be a blessing with the people in the community at Myrtle Beach as we partner in ministry and seek to be a witness to the Kingdom in this place.

Throughout seminary, I considered working for non-profits focusing on advocacy, community witness and service, the proliferation of peace, radical hospitality, and the perpetuation of dignity for all. Then I asked myself a question. If you are not doing this in the parish, then what are you doing?

Cam & Mary Thomas
(and Zeb)



Dear Friends at First Presbyterian,

Mary and I are so excited to begin this journey with the good people at First Presbyterian. Myrtle Beach and the Grand Strand area have always been some of our favorite places for fun, rest, and rejuvenation. While we knew the area, we did not know the people. During a weekend visit, that quickly changed. Embraced by the hospitality and graciousness of our First Presbyterian hosts, we felt like these had been our friends for years. This was a glimpse of the warm culture at First Presbyterian, and we look forward to becoming a part of it.

Serving as a member of the ministry staff, I look forward to partnering with all of you in a variety of ways. Some of my primary areas will be Youth Ministry, Young Adult Support, and Missions. However, I anticipate that our service in this congregation will often be fluid and boundary breaking. In our calling to build up one another as members of the body of Christ in Myrtle Beach, I cannot wait to begin worshipping, learning, and serving with you.

It is with great excitement and deep appreciation that we begin this journey with First Presbyterian Myrtle Beach. The One who has kept us this far will keep us in the years to come so that we may be God's people in God's time at Myrtle Beach.

Grace and Peace,

Cam



Where Love Makes the Difference

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of Myrtle Beach**

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